Auction of seized timber

4385. SHRI INDRAMONI BORA : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Honourable Supreme Court has permitted *vide* order dated 15-1-1998, disposal of "illegally felled seized timber" duly inventorised and cleared by HPC by auction sale;

(b) whether it is also a fact that HPC cleared saw mills were taken on hire by Forest Department of Arunachal Pradesh to process that auctioned timber under supervision of Forest Department; and

(c) if so, who were responsible for dispatches and measurements of such processed timbers and what was the rule and procedure for dispatches of that timbers out side North East?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV): (a) As per Hon'ble Supreme Court's order dated 15-1-1998, out of the illegal timber confiscated , logs suitable for manufacture of veneer and plywood were to be processed by the State Forest Department within their own factories or by hiring such facilities. The remaining timber was to be first offered for sale to the Forest Department for bonafide official use and the balance one was allowed to be sold in public auction or through sealed tenders.

(b) Yes, Sir. However, Hon'ble Supreme Court's order dated 15-1-1998 did not provide for sawing of auctioned timber by the Arunachal Pradesh Forest Department in the High Power Committee cleared saw mills.

(c) As per Hon'ble Supreme Court's order dated 15-1-1998, transportation of auctioned timber (as well as legal timber) including sawn timber outside the North-Eastem region had to be done through Railway under the strict supervision of the Forest Department.

Timber wagons

4386. SHRI INDRAMONI BORA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased'to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that all the timber wagons detained by Ministry during 1999-2000 were loaded with prior permission and under supervision of Forest Officers of Assam as per orders of Honourable Supreme Court dated, 15-1-98;